

Shaker Meetinghouse
E. side of Shaker Road, 1 mi. S. of
State Rt. 2A, approx. 2 mi. W. of
Worcester-Middlesex County line
Harvard
Worcester County
Massachusetts

HABS No. MASS-806

HABS
MASS
14-HARV
8-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

SHAKER MEETINGHOUSE

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Location: East side of Shaker Road, 1 mile south of State Rt. 2A, approximately 2 miles west of Worcester-Middlesex County line, Harvard, Worcester County, Massachusetts

Present Owner and Occupant: Mr. and Mrs. Bradley Dewey

Present Use: Residence

Statement of Significance: This building is a good example of an early Shaker Meetinghouse.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1791. (The same year as the "gathering" of the Harvard Shakers under Father Eleazer Rand and Mother Hannah Kendal.)
2. Architect, builder and suppliers: Unknown. Mention is made in the Shaker Journals of Park Avery being paid for ten months labor on the meetinghouse and Sheffield Hayward being paid for one year. Mention is made of oil and paint invoices in the Shaker Journals of November, 1793, paid by Oliver Adams as a gift to the Society. Shaker Journals are now located in the Fruitlands Museum, Harvard, Massachusetts.
3. Original and subsequent owners: The Harvard Shakers; the Shakers sold the property to Fiske Warren of Harvard, in 1918, who incorporated it into his single-tax Tahanto Enclave; it was then sold to Dr. Louis C. Cornish c. 1934; Mr. Morrison bought the property from Dr. Cornish; it was then sold to Mr. Palmer c. 1955; Erich and Gale Herz bought the property c. 1958; the Heyligers bought the property c. 1964; the property was then sold to Mr. and Mrs. Bradley Dewey in 1971.
4. Alterations and additions: Alterations were made by Bruce Elwell, a Boston architect, under Dr. Cornish's ownership around 1936, when interior partitioning and a sleeping porch were changed. Earlier enlargement around 1850 was carried out by the Shakers by adding two new stairway entrance ells. The roof was changed from a gambrel to a straight gable and slated about this time.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

This building was a meetinghouse for the Shakers between 1791 and 1918.

C. Sources of Information:

This building is shown on the plan of the Harvard First Family delineated by George Kendall in July, 1836; the original is in the Fruitlands Museum, Harvard, Massachusetts and there is a copy in the HABS collection at the Library of Congress. There are some photographs from 1916 by Clara Endicott Sears; the originals are in the Fruitlands Museum, Harvard, Massachusetts. There is a photograph on page 264 of "Gleanings from Old Shaker Journals," by Clara Endicott Sears, Boston and New York, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916.

Prepared by Bayard Underwood, AIA
Shakerton Foundation, Inc.
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